

Interfaith Earthkeepers Hybrid Meeting

December 11, 2024

Attendees: Tom P, Ron H, Sue C, Dennis R, Katharine H, Tom B, Carl B, Cynthia B, Britni C

Moderator: Dennis Minutes: Britni

Brief Check-in

Updates and Continuing Issues

1. City of Eugene and Sustainability Commission

- **Golden Gardens:** The area was once used for gravel extraction. There is now a pond for turtles. There are also otters, beavers, and many birds. The City has proposed adding a sports park. It would be the second largest city park after Alton Baker. They have proposed to put in artificial turf, which has been banned in the EU because of increases in cancer in children due to exposure to forever-chemicals. It also has to be hosed down, so it does require water. Dennis will draft a statement of concern on artificial turf on behalf of EKs.
- **Decarbonization:** EKs are encouraged to look at the recording of the [December 9th City Council work session](#). Sustainability staff presented their work on building decarbonization and recommendations for commercial and multi-residential buildings that the city will consider in 2025.
- **Outreach:** The Sustainability Commission has an education and outreach program. They are exploring other ways to share other information on programs that people can access now. The Biden administration has locked in up to 80% of programs in the Inflation Reduction Act.
- **Street Trees:** The Sustainability Commission will be getting a presentation on street trees. Public input will be part of the process. Dennis will keep us updated.
- The City is looking at putting in a protected bike lane on 24th Avenue between Amazon and Agate
- **Trainsong Biofuels Transfer Facility:** The City of Eugene is currently accepting public comments about the facility's application. Comments must be submitted by 5:00pm on Tuesday, December 17th. This is the only public comment opportunity to officially oppose this project. EK leadership will touch base about providing comment on behalf of EKs. There is [more information](#) on the Beyond Toxics website.

2. Local Organizations: What we do locally is going to be increasingly important with the incoming administration.

- **350 Eugene:** Tom Boyd will be the liaison for EKs. Patty Hine is interested in attending the January EarthKeepers meeting. They are currently doing a fundraiser to raise \$10,000.
- **Fossil Free Coalition:** They had some staff changes and are reactivating their work.
- **Sierra Club:** Sue will be the liaison for EKs.
- **Third Act:** No updates at this time.
- Cynthia can report on the City of Eugene Active Transportation Committee.
- **Coast Range Radio Regional Podcast** ([link here](#)): Tom B recommended a recent interview with Jillian Greg, a climate specialist in Corvallis, titled "State of the Climate Emergency 2024" (38 minutes long).

3. Oregon Coalition for Environmental Rights: There is a fundraising event on Thursday December 12th.

4. Divest Oregon: They are planning lobby days for early 2025 (TBA) to encourage legislators to support the [PAUSE Act](#). It is powerful to include a faith statement on behalf of EarthKeepers. Dennis said to let him know when a clergy person is needed at a lobby meeting.

5. Interfaith Earth Fund: Some members use this as a carbon offset for flying to visit family members. There is more information on the [McKenzie River Trust](#) and [Long Tom Watershed Council](#) websites.

6. Pacific Northwest Climate Alliance: This [coalition](#) includes many organizations from Oregon, Washington, and California. Sue will provide updates.

Upcoming Events and Actions

1. Eugene Healthcare Coalition: Meeting on Monday, 12/16 at 9:00am at IHOP on 11th. They are trying to organize within neighborhood associations, unions, and faith based groups to preserve the quality of healthcare in Eugene. There are concerns about losing healthcare options with the incoming administration.

2. Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO) Summit: Sunday, March 16th 1:00pm to 4:00pm at UU Eugene Church. The theme is Climate Health and Safety.

3. Public Interest Environmental Law Conference ([PIELC](#)): Friday, February 28th through Sunday, March 2nd. EKs are encouraged to attend some workshops.

4. Northwest Forest Plan: Oregon Wild has an informational [webcast](#) on the plan and resources for taking action.

5. Earth Day Preplanning: Dennis shared that Port Townsend put on a large faith community service. He thinks we could do something similar here. EKs are encouraged to bring up the idea in their faith communities. To be discussed at the next meeting.

6. Future Guests: Members are encouraged to invite folks from other local organizations to share about their work that we could partner with. Britni will reach out again to Beyond Toxics.

7. Remember to send events to Cynthia to put on the EK website.

Education Discussion

Becoming Earth by Ferris Jabar Chapters 7-8

Dennis: Modern science is finally becoming aware of Indigenous wisdom. The last chapter is titled Winds of Change. He encouraged us to take a look at this chapter and consider how this applies to the current moment.

Tom B: He is impressed by how interconnected everything is, even the air that makes up the biosphere.

Next Meeting: January 8th at 12:00-1:30pm (online and in person at First Congregational Church)

Moderator: Mark

Minutes: Britni

Education Session: Read Chapter 9 of Becoming Earth: How Our Planet Came to Life by Ferris Jaber